

Celebration

Prom Graduation 2008

*A guide to help broadcasters address illegal
underage drinking and promote teen driving safety*



Celebration

Prom Graduation 2008

For 25 years, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) and stations across the country have joined together to help youth celebrate safely during prom and graduation season by raising awareness of the dangers of illegal underage drinking. With the end of the school year approaching, it's time once again to partner in this important effort.

Every year, more than 5,000 teens die from alcohol-related injuries; approximately 2,000 of these deaths involve impaired driving. The peer pressure to drink or get in a car with someone who has been drinking can be intense. But we can help teens make smart choices.

Research shows that public awareness works. When broadcasters, in partnership with their communities, support alcohol-free prom and graduation events and safe driving practices, teens' lives can be saved. In this guide, we offer programming ideas and public service announcement (PSA) scripts to help your station get the word out to high school students and their families.

Together, we can broadcast life-saving information and help America's teens graduate into life.





The Facts

The facts are undeniable: Illegal underage drinking puts our youth at risk. Use the following information to help get the message across.

FACT: Half of high school seniors report drinking alcohol in the past month. Seven in 10 illegal underage drinkers report binge drinking (having more than five drinks on one occasion). The majority of high school seniors do not view binge drinking as risky. **Alcohol is involved in the deaths of more young people than all other substances combined.**

FACT: Three out of four high school students say they feel peer pressure to drink on prom and graduation nights. Nearly 50 percent of students report feeling pressure to ride with a friend who has been drinking, and more than half of seniors report feeling pressure to drive recklessly. **Teen deaths from crashes are higher during prom and graduation weekends than any other time of the year.**

FACT: According to a recent survey, when it comes to prom night, the majority of parents' greatest fear is for their teen's safety on the road. Fatal crashes involving teen drivers are often associated with nighttime driving, several teens in one car, risky driving and alcohol consumption – all factors that come into play around prom and graduation. **Car crashes remain the number one killer of teenagers.**

FACT: Nine out of 10 high school seniors say alcohol is easy to obtain; two out of three say they can take alcohol from their homes without their parents' knowledge. One in 10 parents say alcohol is okay at prom and graduation parties as long as parents are present. **The majority of teens point to their parents as a main reason for saying no to alcohol.**

Programming Ideas

At Your Station

Bring it home. Report the facts on teen crash fatalities in your state. Make the story personal by interviewing people who have been directly affected by illegal underage drinking and driving in your community.

Explain the reason behind the law. All states and the District of Columbia have minimum drinking age laws. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates these laws have saved 25,509 lives over the past three decades. When some states lowered the legal drinking age in the 1970s, drunk driving crashes immediately increased. Minimum drinking age laws are in place because they work.

Raise sobriety checkpoints awareness. Research shows community awareness of sobriety checkpoints can reduce fatal alcohol-related crashes by 20 percent. Check with local law enforcement to find out if sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols will be operating on prom and graduation weekends in your community. If so, ask local law enforcement how you can help spread the word about their efforts.

Have the experts say it. Counselors can provide real life examples for teens on how to say “no” in the face of peer pressure; parents can share expectations that celebrations will be alcohol-free; law enforcement can highlight the consequences of breaking the law; and emergency responders can share the reality of impaired driving.

Cover local prevention efforts. Provide news coverage about illegal underage drinking prevention efforts and safe prom and graduation programs in your area, such as crash site re-enactments, Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) presentations and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) THINK.Prom programs.

Get teens to safe celebrations. Air information on non-alcoholic after-prom and post-graduation celebrations going on in your community far in advance. Up the “cool” factor by having station on-air personalities deejay or broadcast live from these events.

In the Community

Hold a PSA competition. Peer pressure is among the top reasons teens give for choosing to illegally drink alcohol. Help teens share the message to celebrate safely using their own words. Air winning entries during the weeks leading up to prom and graduation activities.

Host a town hall meeting. Get your community talking about preventing illegal underage drinking and keeping teens safe during prom and graduation weekends. Involve community leaders, law enforcement, retailers that sell alcohol, parents, teachers and teens. Emphasize the law, including penalties for teens who illegally drink, parents and other adults who serve alcohol to minors and businesses that knowingly sell alcohol to those under age.

Sponsor a student/parent contract drive. Distribute student/parent contracts, where students sign a promise not to drink or get in a car with a friend who has been drinking, and parents pledge to provide a safe ride home, no questions asked. Work with schools, tux rental shops, flower shops or other businesses associated with prom and graduation to set up contract pledge sites. Post a downloadable sample pledge on your station’s Web site for easy distribution.



Spotlight on Teen Driving Safety

Get parents talking with their teens about safe transportation to and from prom and graduation activities, as well as safe driving year round.

Tips for parents include:

Put road rules in place. Research shows teens are less likely to be involved in a crash if their parents make safe driving expectations known and follow through with consequences if rules are broken.

Limit the number of teens in a vehicle. When high schoolers have just one additional teen passenger, the chance of a crash increases by 50 percent; when three or more teen passengers pile into a vehicle, the risk of a crash quadruples.

Leave nighttime driving to the adults. Out of all age groups, 16- and 17-year-olds have the highest rate of nighttime crashes. Driving curfews have been shown to save lives. On prom and graduation nights, alternatives to teens driving include chauffeur or cab services and adult-driver carpools.

Teach teens to buckle up and slow down. Have your teen promise to obey speed limits, traffic lights and seatbelt laws. Nearly four out of 10 young male drivers involved in a fatal crash are speeding, and more than six out of 10 young drivers involved in alcohol-related crashes are not wearing a seat belt.

Keep teens eyes on the road. Distractions can be deadly. Agree that there will be no loud music, eating or other distractions while driving.

PSA Scripts

Homeward Bound (PARENT): 10

Nearly one-half of deaths on prom and graduation weekends involve illegal underage drinking and impaired driving. Do you know how your teen is getting home this weekend? This is a message from (STATION).

Rumbo a Casa (PARIENTES): 10

Casi la mitad de las muertes en los fines de semana de la fiesta de prom y de graduación involucran a jóvenes que no tienen la edad para el consumo legal de alcohol, y a conductores ebrios. ¿Usted sabe cómo su adolescente volverá a casa este fin de semana? Éste es un mensaje de (ESTACIÓN).

The Road Ahead (TEEN): 15

On prom and graduation night, make sure you have a safe ride home. Almost half the people who die in crashes involving an underage impaired driver are not the driver. Walking away from an unsafe ride might be hard to do, but it can save your life. This is a message from (STATION).

El Camino por Delante (ADOLESCENTES): 15

En la noche de las fiestas de prom y graduación asegúrate de que tendrás transporte seguro para volver a casa. Casi la mitad de las personas que mueren en accidentes que involucran a un conductor menor de la edad legal para beber alcohol pero que está ebrio, no son el conductor. Quizá sea difícil evitar un viaje que sabes que no será seguro, pero puede salvarte la vida. Éste es un mensaje de (ESTACIÓN).

Graduation Gift (TEEN): 20

Not sure what to get your friends for graduation? How about giving each other a promise to get there and back safely. Every year, teens die on prom and graduation weekends when they make the choice to illegally drink alcohol or get into a car with someone who has been drinking. This year, make a pact with your friends to celebrate safely. It's a gift that might just save a life. This is a message from (STATION).

Send the Right Message (PARENT): 30

More than 5,000 teens die every year because of illegal underage drinking. Some parents choose to serve alcohol at prom and graduation parties. When alcohol is served to those underage it is unsafe and against the law. What you say and what you do matter. When teens don't drink, most often they say their parents are the reason why. Talk to your child. Talk to other parents. Sending the message that alcohol is okay for minors can cost far more than you think. It can cost a life. This is a message from (STATION).



Resources

Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking

1 Choke Cherry Road
Rockville MD 20857
Phone 240 747 4980
www.stopalcoholabuse.gov

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

511 East John Carpenter Freeway Suite 700
Irving TX 75062
Phone 800 GET MADD (438 6233)
www.madd.org

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

Impaired Driving Division
400 7th Street SW Room 5125
Washington DC 20590
Phone 888 327 4236
www.nhtsa.gov

RADD: The Entertainment Industry's Voice for Road Safety

4370 Tujunga Avenue Suite 330
Studio City CA 91604
Phone 818 752 7799
www.radd.org

Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)

255 Main Street
Marlborough MA 01752
Phone 877 SADD INC (723 3462)
www.sadd.org

In addition to the resources above, the following sources used in creating this brochure include: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Road Ready Teens, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



1771 N Street NW Washington DC 20036 2800